

“...today you shall be with Me in Paradise.” “...today you shall be with Me in Paradise.”
The Ever-Accessible Savior The Ever-Accessible Savior

Lk.23:39-43

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I. Notice the **utter obstinacy** of sinful men against the Lord Jesus and the things of God, Lk.23:35-39

A. Observe the **breadth** of this utter obstinacy: it is true of **all classes** of people. (“obstinacy” means unreasonably determined to have one’s way; not yielding to reason or plea; stubborn.)

1. The educated and knowledgeable – the rulers, Lk.23:35b (chief priests, scribes, elders, rulers, Mt.27:41-43)
 - a. What they had seen: the countless miracles of Christ
 - b. What they had heard: 1) their own people say, Jn.7:31 > Isa.53:4; Matt.8:16, 17, 2) the Lord Jesus say, Jn.8:24
 - c. What they correctly understood, Jn.5:17, 18 - Jesus is God.
 - d. What they said as they saw the Lord Jesus dying upon the cross, Lk.23:35b, Matt.27:42, 43 > chief priests, scribes and elders
 2. The common – the soldiers > Lk.23:36, 37; Matt. 27:39 and the people > Lk.23:35a; Matt.27:39-40
 - a. What they had read, Lk.23:38
 - b. What they saw: a man claiming to be a king dying upon a cross like a convicted criminal.
 - c. What they said as they saw the Lord Jesus dying on the cross, Lk.23:37b
 3. The criminal(s) – the malefactor(s), Lk.23:39
 - a. What they heard: the deriding of their religious leaders, the mocking of the soldiers, Lk.23:35-37
 - b. What they saw: a man claiming to be God and a king dying just like they were.
 - c. What at least one of them said as they saw the Lord Jesus dying on the cross, Lk.23:39 (Matt.27:44; Mk.15:32)
 4. How vividly this utter obstinacy portrays the truth of Rom.8:7 and I Cor.2:14.
- B. Observe the **depth** of this utter obstinacy: it is even unto **death**.
1. Notice the **hard-heartedness** of the one criminal who spoke, Lk.23:39
 2. There was no fear of God before his eyes, Rom.3:18

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II. Notice the **unexpected and incredible grace** of God poured out upon an undeserving sinner, Lk.23:40-42.

- A. Just when all seemed to be the darkest, something extraordinary happened.
- B. Notice **the 3 proofs** of this criminal's repentance and saving faith.
1. His **reproof** of wickedness, his hating it and forsaking it, Lk.23:40. (**Repentance unto Eternal Life IS a saving grace**, whereby a sinner out of a true sense of his/her sin and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, does with grief and hatred of his/her sin **turn from it unto God**, with full purpose of and endeavor after, new obedience.)
 2. His **acknowledgement** of his own sinfulness and the Lord Jesus' sinlessness, Lk.23:41 (See Phil.2:13; Matt.16:15-17)
 3. His **manifested faith** in the Lord Jesus Christ, Lk.23:42
 - a. We are hard pressed to find a more **remarkable and striking** example of true faith, than what we find in our text.
 - b. Notice how crystal clear must have been **the spiritual eyes** of this criminal's mind to behold:
 - 1) **Life** in death
 - 2) **Exaltation** in humiliation
 - 3) **Glory** in shame
 - 4) **Victory** in seeming defeat
 - 5) A **kingdom** in condemnation
 - c. **Truly** this criminal's repentance and faith can ONLY be ascribed to God's glorious, saving grace!!

III. Notice the **inconceivable readiness** of God to quickly and kindly receive those who call upon Him with repentance and faith, 23:43.

- A. In the midst of all the Lord Jesus' **pain** and **suffering**, He readily received this penitent sinner.
- B. There can be **no doubt** that the Lord Jesus is prepared to admit into His kingdom all who call upon Him for salvation, Rom.10:13; Jn.6:37b. The Lord Jesus opened the gate of heaven for this criminal.

IV. Applications:

- A. **To Believers:** **Be conformed to the image of Christ!** **Be accessible** to sinners who come to you earnestly seeking the Savior for salvation! You cannot save them, nor assure them that they will go to Paradise after they die, **BUT you can point them to the One** who can. **Be approachable** like the Lord Jesus Christ!
- B. **To Unbelievers:** The Lord Jesus Christ still hears and responds positively to the prayer of penitent sinners! **He is the Ever-Accessible Savior to those who call upon Him!** **Call upon Him today!**

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